Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

15 (Currently amended). A method for identifying or screening a candidate therapeutic agent for psoriasis, comprising contacting a polypeptide having phospholipase A_2 activity with a test substance, assaying an inhibitory action of the test substance on the phospholipase A_2 activity of the polypeptide, and determining inhibition on the phospholipase A_2 activity, wherein the polypeptide is an isolated and purified polypeptide selected from the following (a) or (b):

(a) a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:9; or

(b) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid capable of hybridizing under high-stringent condition with a complement of a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:8, wherein hybridization under high-stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing at 65°C for 16 hours in a hybridization solution (6xSSC, 0.5%SDS, 5xDenhardt's solution, 100μg/ml salmon sperm DNA), washing at 65°C for 5 minutes in a washing solution (2xSSC, 0.5%SDS), and thereafter washing twice at 65°C for 30 minutes in washing solution (0.1xSSC, 0.5%SDS) ~~where hybridization under stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing under a temperature condition of 50 to 65°C for about 16 hours in 6xSSC or in a hybridization solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto, pre-washing in 6xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto if~~

~~needed, and thereafter washing in 1xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto~~.

16 (Previously presented). The method according to claim 15, wherein the action of the test substance is assayed by carrying out an enzymatic reaction in a reaction system comprising the polypeptide having phospholipase A_2 activity, a substrate for the phospholipase A_2, and the test substance, and assaying an inhibitory action on the enzymatic activity of the phospholipase A_2.

17 (Original). The method according to claim 16, wherein the substrate is a glycerophospholipid, and the enzymatic activity is an activity for hydrolyzing an ester bond at 2-position of the glycerophospholipid.

Claims 18-26 (Cancelled).

27 (Currently amended). A diagnostic method for psoriasis, which comprises assaying an expression level of a gene in a biological sample collected from a human, wherein said gene encodes a polypeptide having phospholipase A_2 activity selected from the following (a) or (b):

(a) a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:9; or

(b) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid capable of hybridizing under high-stringent condition with a complement of a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:8, wherein hybridization under high-stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing at 65°C for 16 hours in a hybridization

solution (6xSSC, 0.5%SDS, 5xDenhardt's solution, 100μg/ml salmon sperm DNA), washing at 65°C for 5 minutes in a washing solution (2xSSC, 0.5%SDS), and thereafter washing twice at 65°C for 30 minutes in washing solution (0.1xSSC, 0.5%SDS) ~~where hybridization under stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing under a temperature condition of 50 to 65°C for about 16 hours in 6xSSC or in a hybridization solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto, pre-washing in 6xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto if needed, and thereafter washing in 1xSSC or in a solution having a salt concentration equivalent thereto~~.

28 (Currently amended). The diagnostic method according to claim 27, wherein the expression level is assayed using a nucleic acid capable of hybridizing with a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:8 under high-stringent conditions, or a complement thereof as a probe or primer, wherein hybridization under high-stringent condition is carried out by hybridizing at 65°C for 16 hours in a hybridization solution (6xSSC, 0.5%SDS, 5xDenhardt's solution, 100μg/ml salmon sperm DNA), washing at 65°C for 5 minutes in a washing solution (2xSSC, 0.5%SDS), and thereafter washing twice at 65°C for 30 minutes in washing solution (0.1xSSC, 0.5%SDS).

29 (Previously presented). The diagnostic method according to claim 28, wherein the probe or primer is a nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:4 or a complement thereof.

Claim 30 (Cancelled).